REMARKS

Claims 1 to 49 were presented by Applicants. The Examiner rejected claims 1-9, 11, 14-22, 25-35 and 37-49, and objected to claims 10, 12, 13, 23, 24 and 36 as including allowable subject matter though dependent upon rejected base claims. Claims 1 and 14 are amended to make the phrase "shared content pointers" consistent throughout the two claims. The amendments are thus formal in nature, and not made for reasons of overcoming the cited references. No new matter is being added.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-9, 11, 14-22, 25-35 and 37-38 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over Dharap.

Claim 1 as amended is illustrative and recites:

A method for searching an information repository, the repository characterized as a hierarchical object space, the method comprising the steps of:

establishing a collection of shared content pointers, each shared content pointer corresponding to an object;

receiving at least one subject keyword;

searching at least a portion of the collection of shared content pointers in accordance with the keyword query; and

deriving at least one additional keyword from the collection, the additional keyword associated with the query keyword.

The claimed invention enables a search and recommendation system in which a keyword is used as a query to search a collection of users' shared content pointers, and an additional associated keyword is derived from the search. This allows a community of users to share data, e.g., bookmarked web pages, that they find to be valuable, thus increasing the usefulness of searches.

Dharap does not disclose the invention of claim 1. Dharap recites extracting objects from a user's access history in order to determine a topical context for a search query, and using the topical context to return search results (see, e.g., col. 2, lines 15-30). Unlike the claimed invention, Dharap relies on searches performed by a single user. In contrast, the claimed invention uses a collection of shared content pointers to derive additional keywords. Far from anticipating the claimed invention, by relying on a single user's access history, Dharap teaches away from what is claimed. Accordingly, claim 1 is patentable over Dharap. Independent claim 14 as amended is also patentable over Dharap for at least the same reason as claim 1. Similarly, independent claims 25 and 31 each recite "establishing a collection of content pointers, the content pointers corresponding to objects contained within the information repository, each contributed by at least one user of a plurality of users". Since Dharap does not teach, suggest or disclose a collection of content pointers contributed by at least one user of a plurality of users, claims 25 and 31 are patentable over Dharap.

Dependent claims 2-9, 11, 15-22 26-35 and 37-38 are also patentable over Dharap both because they dependent from patentable independent claims, and also because they recite their own patentable features.

The Examiner rejected claims 39-49 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over Kravets et al (Kravets). Claim 39 is illustrative and recites:

> A method of structuring a collection of shared content pointers contributed by a plurality of users, wherein each shared content pointer is associated with a content source, the content pointers organized into a hierarchy of topical categories, comprising the steps of:
>
> receiving a data item identifying a content source;
>
> determining a category of the collection of shared content pointers in which to store the data item; and

storing the data item as a content pointer in the determined category of the collection.

According to the claimed invention, users contribute content pointers they wish to share, each content pointer associated with a source. A data item is received identifying a source, and a category of shared content pointers in which the data item should be stored is determined. Finally, the data item is stored as a content pointer in the determined category.

Kravets does not disclose the claimed invention. Kravets discloses a search data processor for organizing search queries and results. Kravets does not disclose a collection of shared content pointers contributed by a plurality of users. The Examiner points to Fig. 4 of Kravets as meeting the claimed features of claim 39. To the contrary, nothing in Fig. 4 discloses or suggests the existence of shared content pointers contributed by a plurality of users. Accordingly, claim 39 is patentable over Kravets. Independent claim 43 is patentable over Kravets for reasons analogous to claim 39.

Dependent claims 40-42 and 44-49 depend from independent claims 39 and 43, respectively, and therefore derive their patentability from the patentability of claims 39 and 43, in addition to reciting their own patentable features. Accordingly, claims 40-42 and 44-49 are patentable over Kravets.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the Examiner is asked to issue a Notice of Allowance of all pending claims. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney by telephone, mail or electronic mail in order to advance prosecution. Applicants acknowledge that a copy of any electronic mail communications will be made of record in the application file per MPEP § 502.03.

Respectfully submitted,
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